

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated October 18, 2006, claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Englund et al. Although the Examiner identified certain portions of the Englund et al. reference that the Examiner believes correspond to all of the claim limitations of claim 1, the Examiner also stated that the phrase in claim 1 of "the coupling device automatically firmly joins... in the movement direction" was directed to functional language and does not add further structure to the system as claimed. The Examiner stated this language indicates an intended use.

Under the assumption that the Examiner did not give patentable weight to this language of claim 1, this language has been editorially revised to retain a certain amount of functional description, but to specifically tie that language to structure in claim 1. As stated in MPEP §2173.05(g), there is nothing inherently wrong with defining some part of an invention in functional terms. Functional language does not, in and of itself, render a claim improper. Since the use of functional language is specifically approved, under appropriate circumstances, in this section of the MPEP, and since it is axiomatic that no language in a claim can be ignored, Applicants submit that the revised version of claim 1 should be examined to take the functions performed by the claimed structure into account. Applicants acknowledge that it is always necessary that an apparatus claim be distinguishable over the prior art in terms of structure, and that function *alone* cannot serve as a basis for patentability. Nevertheless, when structure is appropriately tied to a function, the aforementioned section of the MPEP approves the description of a claim element in that manner.

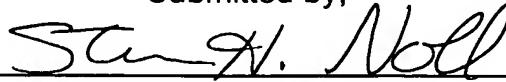
This being the case, Applicants request that the Examiner again review the arguments in support of patentability presented in Applicants' response filed July 10, 2006, rather than repeating all of those arguments herein the present response. In view of the revisions to the language of claim 1, Applicants submit that those arguments, although to a certain extent based on the aforementioned function that has now been tied to the structure of claim 1, are relevant to patentability.

In general, Applicants submit that the Englund et al. reference discloses only that the coils are mounted on the bed, and more specifically that the coil can be mounted on the lower bed or on an insert or filling piece, as stated at column 4, line 56 and column 4, lines 49-50. Englund et al. teaches positioning the coil in a coil seat 3, as can be seen from Figures 1 and 2. The Englund et al. reference does not disclose coupling and decoupling in any form, much less automatically coupling and releasing to/from the patient bed, so that releasing is controlled by movement of the patient bed as defined in claim 1.

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that the Englund et al. reference does not disclose all of the elements of claim 1, as arranged and operating in that claim, and thus does not constitute an anticipation of claim 1. Claims 2-7 add further structure to the novel combination of claim 1, and therefore none of claims 2-7 is anticipated by Englund et al. for the same reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1.

All claims of the application are therefore submitted to be in condition for allowance, and early reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Submitted by,

 (Reg. 28,982)

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